

August 2013



Jodi Ross, Town Manager

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Citizen petition articles for our October 21st Special Town Meeting are due by noon on September 4th.



Dear Westford residents,

On August 12th Money Magazine announced that Westford received the distinction of being named the 11th best place to live in the United States! The article cited our excellent schools, our extensive conservation land, our two public beaches and other recreational opportunities, our proximity to Boston, and the fact that we are home to high tech companies like Red Hat and Juniper Networks. I know our volunteerism, our community events, our care, concern and assistance for all Westford residents during their time of need, and the level of public services we provide, contribute to making our town an especially wonderful place in which to live.

There are so many examples of actions by our residents and our town staff that demonstrate how special Westford is. I will share a few examples with you:

David Crocker, a Licensed Well Specialist in our Water Department, and son of lifelong Forge Village resident Mickey Crocker, came to the rescue of a resident recently who wrote to me to express his true appreciation of David's efforts. The gentleman had fallen in his driveway, and David, who was driving by while working, not only stopped to assist him, but dropped by later in the day to ensure the gentleman was still okay.

The 9/11 Memorial which is being constructed through the efforts of Firefighter David Christiana and our 9/11 Memorial Committee is nearing completion. This six foot tall memorial structure is being constructed in the courtyard of the Police, Fire and Town Hall to commemorate those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001. The completed tribute will be unveiled at an event on September 11, 2013 at 7pm, and all are invited to attend.

Recently members of our Westford Summer School for the Performing Arts, run by Mike Towers, sang our National Anthem at the Redsox game. Here is a link to this spectacular rendition and performance: www.youtube.com/

Firefighter David Christiana, the Westford Firefighter's Association, and the Fire Department are making up Firefighter Cemetery Flag Markers to honor our Veteran Firefighters who have passed on, for their service and commitment to our town. This custom dates back to the start of the Boston Fire Department. The main part of the project is researching who was on the department and how long they served. David sculpted a marker, molded it and now pours the markers by hand, and delivers them to the grave sites with other firefighters. A lot of research has been



conducted into newspaper articles, Town Reports, Fire Log books, and photos dating back to 1908. With help from the Museum, the IT Department, Assistant Town Clerk Patty Dubey, JV Fletcher Library, the Recreation, Cemetery and Veterans Departments, David was able to create a registry with about 200 identified firefighters who served the department and have since died. David is now seeking help. Many residents have had relatives who were firemen in town or know of others who were and have passed on and know where they may be buried. Here is a link to the Firefighter Burial Index. Residents may see if they know anyone on the list (or someone who should be on the list) and fill in the blanks.

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Each summer, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office sponsors a free public safety academy for 9, 10 and 11 year olds. The academy exposes our youngest citizens to role models in Public Safety – namely their local Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services and Sheriff's personnel. The Academy is run at the Middlesex



Training Academy in Billerica. This summer there were 53 cadets, and the Fire Department hosted them at the Roger's Station after they spent the morning at our Police Station. The firefighters taught them about how they deliver Emergency Medical Services, and explained the difference between a ladder truck and a pumper truck. The children were able to have firsthand experience by wearing safety equipment and spraying water from hoses. I would like to say a special thank you to Officer Mike Croteau and others at the Police Department and Fire Department Lieutenants Don Parsons and Dan Britko, Firefighter/EMT/Paramedics Tim Bellemore, Scott Florio,

Matthew Svatek, and Firefighter/EMTs Don Post, Darren Lanier, Andrew Anderson, and Justin Searles.

Resident volunteers Ginni Burgoyne and Christine Cournoyer (a teacher at Westford Academy) are coordinating a fundraiser to purchase a compact, lightweight K9 video camera that will be mounted onto the back of our K-9's ballistic vest. The eye of the video camera is on a swivel post above the K-9's back, affording his handler and response team a remote view between the dog's ears. It can be used in daylight or in extremely low light with enhanced infra-red illumination. There are only two such cameras in this state and they are both in Southeastern

Massachusetts. Their goal is to equip the Westford K-9 Team with this K-9 Video Camera to help not only our community but also allow Officer Peladeau and his team to provide surrounding towns in the Northeast area with mutual aid.



If you have questions please contact these volunteers at: westfordk9project@gmail.com or call Ginni at (978) 375-4900.

Prior to the prom season, our Firefighters, Police Officers, Healy Funeral Home, and Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) from Nashoba Valley Technical High School and Westford Academy conducted a live demonstration of the dangers of driving while intoxicated. A mock car accident was staged, with emergency responders extricating patients from the vehicle. This mock accident results in a student being arrested after failing a sobriety test; another student is fatally injured while others are transported by ambulance. Our students from SADD coordinate this event each year to remind their fellow students of the dangers of driving after drinking.



Town Manager's Newsletter (continued)

We have had a lot of press in the Lowell Sun recently as a new reporter, Samantha Allen, has been hired and assigned to cover just Westford and Tyngsborough. Recently an editorial (not written by Samantha) appeared stating "Westford's deficit is a growing concern" and suggesting Westford might be next (after Detroit) to file for bankruptcy. I want to assure you that Westford is not filing for bankruptcy. In June, the Board of Selectmen asked me to prepare a three year budget projection to present to them, the Finance Committee, and the School Committee. In my worst case projection, I stated that if Westford did not take appropriate measures, we could face a deficit as high as \$24M in Fiscal Year 2018. The assumptions used in my projections included current budget submissions for FYs2015-17, a 15% health insurance increase November 1st, with a 12% in outlying years. For the past five years, our projected deficit for the next fiscal year has appeared substantial. Because of that situation we have taken many proactive steps to balance the budget. These steps included asking our employees to take 0% Cost of Living increases and to accept changes to their health insurance including increased co-pays. We have streamlined operations, not filled positions, reduced our energy costs, negotiated reductions in many contracts, and enforced our town's recycling policy. We have generated new revenue by applying for grants, seeking reimbursement for storm-related expenses, selling permitting software developed by town staff, and adopting local meals and hotels excise taxes.

Not unlike your home budget, when there are greater expenses than revenue or income, changes need to be made. That's what we do every year. Last year the town enjoyed some increased revenue due to a spike in building permits and resultant new growth (primarily Cornerstone Square). Our hotel and meals excise taxes were up over projections, and we received other unanticipated revenue. Rest assured that our town staff and I, along with our Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee, are working together to present a budget that maintains the services you have grown accustomed to, and creatively prepare for our future. In a Letter to the Lowell Sun Editor, Selectman Chair Kelly Ross wrote "A time may come, and possibly sooner rather than later, when a large solution such as a Proposition 2 1/2 override or a reduction in services is required. We will strive to avoid these last-resort options as we have successfully done in recent years, but we will do our best to be prepared if a worst-case scenario comes to pass." I encourage all interested residents to attend our budget hearings that begin in November and continue through the winter while we develop a budget that is fiscally responsible, while striving to maintain the level of services which contribute to making Westford the wonderful community it is.

The Selectmen were presented with information about how to create a quiet zone to prevent the sounding of train horns near the four rail crossings in town. The preliminary analysis indicated that substantial intersection improvements may be needed before a quiet zone can be established. At this time, there is not any funding to pursue this effort, but we will continue to investigate ways to limit the impact of the Pan Am Rail operations on our residents.

Our Board of Selectmen has approved the Permanent Town Building Committee's recommendation to construct a new Center Fire Station on Boston Road. This committee has been studying this aging facility for over a year and their



Railroad Crossings in Westford

recommendation is to build a new station across from Drew Farm on Boston Road. Our Special Town Meeting is set for October 21, 2013, and there will be an article on the warrant for the design and project manager for the new station.

You have heard that Westford resident's sightings of bears has increased, and lately we have received many reports of sightings of bobcats. If you see a bobcat, please do not disturb it, and please keep children and pets away. According to Mass Wildlife, adult bobcats weigh between 15 and 35 pounds and measure 28-47 inches in overall length. They most commonly prey on medium-sized animals such as rabbits, but will eat mice, squirrels, skunk, opossum, muskrat, birds, and snakes. More information about living with bobcats may be found online here: Wildlife-Living/Living-With-Bobcats.pdf, or call the Mass Wildlife Northeast District office in Ayer: (978) 772-2145.



Bobcat seen locally

Fire Chief Richard Rochon retired from our Westford Fire Department after more than 37 years of valued service. Chief Rochon was promoted to the position of Fire Chief in 1995 after serving as fire prevention officer, fire fighter, and call fire fighter. Chief Rochon deserves appreciation for leading the department through the challenges associated with providing fire protection and ambulance service during a period of significant residential and commercial growth for our community. Please join me in extending my best wishes to Rich and his wife Kathy for a healthy, happy retirement. Fire Captain Joseph Targ was promoted to be Interim Fire Chief while we go through the search process for a new Fire Chief.

After 14 years at the Water Department, Records Supervisor II, Dianne Cloutier also retired recently. Dianne also served as Chief Steward for the Communications Workers of America collective bargaining unit in town. Dianne will be missed for her efforts in both the Water Department and as Chief Steward. Her vacated job has been filled by Lauri Plourde, formerly our Assistant Town Accountant, and I wish Lauri the best in her new position.

As a reminder, citizen petition articles for our October 21st Special Town Meeting are due by noon on September 4th.

Sincerely,

Jodi Ross



Westford Firefighters Pipes and Drum 4th of July Parade 2013 Brookline NH. They also participated in the Pepperell 4th of July Celebration Parade.

Council On Aging - Coming Events

MINI GOLF AT KIMBALL FARM

Thursday, September 5th

10:15 AM

Come out and enjoy a round of mini-golf.

A lunch will follow with choice of hot dog or hamburger, a drink and a small ice cream.

A \$14 fee includes all. Register early at 978-692-5523.

Arrive & check in at 10:15 AM.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Tuesday, September 10th

8:00 AM

Jose Ramirez will be presenting on his newly published book-

"Defining Moments: A Cuban Exile's Story About Discovery and the Search for a Better Future".

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Thursday, September 12th 8:30 AM

KIMBALL GOLF TOURNAMENT

This year, we will be having the 15th Annual Cameron Classic at Kimball's

Thursday, September 19th

8:45 AM

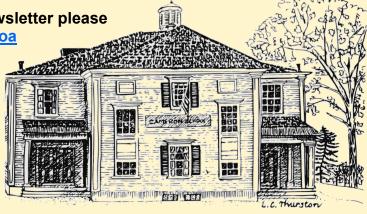
A \$14 entry fee will include 18 holes of golf, a hot dog or hamburger lunch with a cold drink and a small ice cream. This has proven to be a fun day for beginners and low handicaps alike. You may register with a partner or as an individual.

Payment is due at time of registration.

Please call 978-692-5523.

Arrive and sign in at 8:45 AM.

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website at: www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on Newsletters.



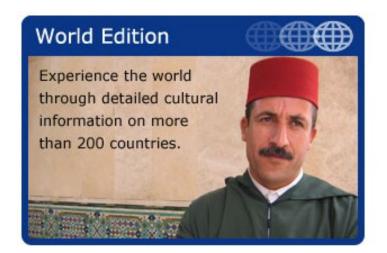
Westford Senior Center

J. V. Fletcher Library News

In the Spirit of Inter-Departmental Collaboration...

The J. V. Fletcher Library and the Westford School System will be sharing an amazing "global resources" Database. The Fletcher Library has purchased a subscription to the CultureGrams database and will share the use of it with the students and teachers of Westford. School children will not have to come to the Library to use this database, they can access it from their schools and from their homes. Of course this resource is also available to Westford patrons who visit the Library or who want to use it remotely from their homes or offices.

The **CultureGrams database** is divided into four sections:









Recreation Department News

Westford Recreation Aces USTA Jr. Team Tennis had a successful summer season and made it to the Sectional Championships at UMASS Amherst. The team, coached by Donna Holmes, PTR is competing in the 14 & under age division. The team had their first matches on Wednesday, August 14 against Longmeadow, with girls double team of Victoria Donescu and Marisha Ramprasad winning their match in 2 sets, 4-2, 4-2. In boys singles, Jerry Ding tied his match at 6-6. The teams second set of matches were against Vermont with girls



Back row: Coach Donna Holmes, Andee Song, Victoria Donescu, Ben Moore, Jerry Ding, Jonathan Cao, Manisha Ramprasad, (front row) Caleb Amidon, Tommy Welham, and Maeve Proulx

doubles winning 4-2, 4-1. Last matches of the day were against a strong Connecticut team with Westford team winning 10 games. The competition continued on August 15 with play against New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island.

Recreation Program Notes

Recreation Fall program brochure is being sent to all residents the week of August 19th. Program registration information will be on line at www.westfordrec.com.

The popular Westford Partnership for Children Afterschool Enrichment program forms are already on line or available at the Department office as the program starts on the first day of school August 27th. The afterschool program is offered at all six Elementary school and Stony Brook Middle school with Blanchard students transported to Stony Brook. The program follows the school calendar and Includes early release days.

- Pat Savage, Recreation Department Director

Recreation Department News (continued)

Two Westford-Littleton Crew Members Participate in Canadian Henley

Sophie Anderson and Amelia Shein traveled to Saint Catherine's, Ontario to compete in the 131st Royal Canadian Henley. Anderson and Shein representing Westford – Littleton Crew went to race in the Singles and Pair. Monday August 5th they both took to the course at 10AM to practice in their Singles and then to join forces in the Pair.

Tuesday the 6th was the first day of racing where both Anderson and Shein launched at the same time to compete in two different heats. First to come down the course was Amelia Shein, who was in the pack for most of the race. At 200 meters to go Shein caught a boat crippling crab (where the oar gets stuck in the water) and flipped over her boat. She immediately flipped her boat back over climbed in and finished the race to the loud applause and appreciation from every spectator in the grandstands at the finish line.



Next to come down the course was Sophie Anderson. She came through the first 500 meter marker even with the top 4 boats. By the time she hit the 1000 meter mark she was fighting back and forth for third. As she approached the sprint (300meters to go) she and the boat next to her were neck and neck coming across the finish line in 4th place by seconds.

Thursday the 8th was their next race in the pair. Shein and Anderson took off the starting line in first place and they continued to lead the pack up until the 500 meter mark. All the crews came through the 500 meter mark in a cluster. Spectators and Coaches looked on from the shore noting that Anderson and Shein had "passion". Anderson and Shein came through the finish line in 6th place with a time of 8:41.49.

This is the first time Westford-Littleton Crew has traveled to this event and Coach Eddie Bruce could not have been happier with the performances of the athletes.

4th Annual Forge Pond Fun Regatta/Family Festival - September 8th, 2013

FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL: Fun for the entire family. Live music featuring The Syracusa Project (WA Pat Gendron's Band), Recording Artist Krista Angelucci, cookout, face painting, kids games, inflatable bounce house, and more. Wrist Bands available - \$5.00/each and includes all children's activities and unlimited bounce house.

FUN REGATTA: NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY: From age 12 and up - you're never too old to try rowing. Come alone, bring a friend or form a team of four, the choice is yours. This is great opportunity to row in an 8-person shell. Crew team members and coaches will explain and demonstrate how to row and provide participants with an opportunity to practice their rowing technique on erg-o-meters (dry land rowing exercise machines). Then on to the water for quick overview of proper technique, boat and oar handling. rowing terminology, safety on and off the water, as well as on-the-water guidance while racing.

Four new rowers will join an experienced coxswain and four experienced crew members to round out the 8 person rowing shell in a race against other new competitors.

Registration forms available at the Recreation Department (35 Town Farm Road, Westford). Cost \$35/per person or \$120/team of 4. Includes rowing, T-shirt, and lunch.

It is FREE to come to Forge Pond and see what is going on. (See poster on next page)

Questions: Contact Karla at the Recreation Department or email kferrini@westfordma.gov or 978-692-5532





Engineering Department News

Forge Village Road, Flag Road, Main Street Intersection Improvement Project

ONYX Corporation of Acton is continuing work to complete the Flagg Road, Main Street & Forge Village Road Improvement Project. The final phase of the retaining wall construction is underway and should be completed within the next week. This project was initiated by the Highway Department to repair Flagg Road, upgrade the drainage system, replace a retaining wall that was in failure and improve water quality flowing into Boutwell Brook. The traveling public will mostly notice a new



configuration of the intersection. Currently, this is a "Y" shaped yield condition that will become a stop sign controlled "T" intersection.



Town Engineer, Paul Starratt with Conservation Commission Summer Intern, Adrienne Goodwin conducting an erosion/sedimentation/work -limit control line inspection.





New retaining wall being installed, replacing old wall in failure.

Health Department News

High Dose Flu Vaccine Available in Westford

The Westford Health Department will once again offer the High -Dose flu vaccine for Westford seniors 65 and over this coming flu season. High-Dose flu vaccine was approved by the FDA in 2010 for adults age 65 and older and will be offered at a special Westford Flu Clinic on **Wednesday, September 25th** at the Franco American Club. Last year over 550 residents were vaccinated with this vaccine

Seniors are at a higher risk of developing influenza and its complications due to a decreased immune response to vaccines as adults get older. The Health Department is pleased to have the opportunity to be proactive and offer this more effective vaccine for our 65 and older residents. Regular flu vaccine will still be offered at other flu clinics to Westford resident's age 36 months and up.

Because of the vaccine age requirement, this clinic is being held specifically for residents 65 and older. Residents are asked to come to the clinic at times scheduled by the first letter of the last name:

(A - H) 12:30 - 1:30 (I - Q) 1:30 - 2:30 (R - Z) 2:30 - 3:30

As always, there will be no charge for any flu vaccine, regardless of the type of dose or insurance coverage. As in previous years, the Westford Health Dept. will seek reimbursement from Medicare and other insurances for those residents who have coverage, as a way to offset the flu clinic expenses.

Watch for more information on all flu clinics coming soon in the local newspapers, the Fall Westford Health Dept Brochure, the Westford Patch, and on the Westford Health Dept. webpage under Public Health and Safety.

Please also note that any resident who is homebound can request a home visit. To schedule a home visit or for any questions, please contact the Health Department at 978 692-5509



Recreational Camp Inspections

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires that all recreational, day, and overnight camps for children must be inspected and licensed by the local board of health in the city or town where the camp is located.

The primary purpose of the regulations and inspection is to ensure that the camp provides an appropriate environment to protect the health, safety, and well being of the campers. The regulations also establish minimum sanitary and housing standards to protect the children at camp.

At the Health Department, we are mandated by state law to inspect all camps. Within the inspections we review camp polices, ensure structures and equipment are safe and that there are adequate sanitary facilities. We review that background checks were done on all staff and volunteers, and that there will be sufficient supervision of campers. We review all camp records of campers and staff to evaluate whether immunization records and physicals are up to date. Additionally we ensure that all camps operating in Westford have

appropriate plans in case of medical emergencies, natural and other physical disasters, injury and have a fire preventions plans. If your child is attending a camp, ask if they are licensed by the Board of Health!

2013 Licensed Recreational Camps in Westford

The Camp at Nashoba Valley

One Stop Fun

Rumphius Creativity Unhinged

Marcus Lewis Day Camp
Westford Swim & Tennis

Health Department News (continued)

Q&A REGARDING MOSQUITO REDUCTION & SPRAYING

How the risk of contracting the West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis disease is being reduced in Westford?

The risk of West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) disease can be decreased by reducing individuals' exposure to mosquitoes and by taking special precautions during periods of higher risk of infection, including reducing mosquito populations.

Westford's comprehensive mosquito control program includes many of the following activities:

Surveillance – regular testing of mosquitoes at various designated testing sites (mosquito pools)

Education and Outreach – education of the public about what steps they can take to prevent mosquitoes from breeding around their home and how to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes (e.g., repair window screens in your home, wear clothing that covers your skin when outside, use effective mosquito repellent, etc.)

Source reduction - elimination of potential breeding sites by emptying water from containers such as garbage cans, flower pots, birdbaths, and discarded auto tires

Larviciding - the application of chemicals or bacterial products (or larvicides) to mosquito breeding areas to kill or inhibit the growth of mosquito larvae (the early stage of the mosquito) from developing into the adult form

Adulticiding - the application of pesticide chemicals to kill the adult form of the mosquito. These are applied by truck-mounted sprayers or aerially when the risk of an outbreak is apparent, as indicated by increasing numbers of mosquitoes carrying virus and/or human cases of disease.

How to prevent mosquitoes

- Mosquitoes need still water to develop. Look around outside your house for containers and other things that might collect water and turn them over, regularly empty them, or dispose of them.
- Cover recycling bins and trash containers, flatten or punch holes in cans and containers
- Dispose of, or cover old tires.
- Frequently change water in bird bath and pet dishes. Stagnant water attracts mosquitoes.
- Stock ornamental pools with fish.
- Keep buckets, barrels, tubs, toys, and coolers turned upside down or covered.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.
- Clean clogged roof gutters; remove leaves and debris that may prevent drainage of rainwater.
- Keep swimming pools clean and properly chlorinated.

How to avoid mosquito bites......

- Check and repair all window and door screens for holes or cracks
- Avoid areas of high mosquito concentrations during dusk and dawn
- Use a repellent containing DEET or oil of lemon eucalyptus according to the instructions given on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age. Avoid concentrations above 10-15% for children and concentrations above 30-35 % for adults. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age. Cream, lotion or stick formula is the best.
- When you are outdoors, wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and socks especially with children when
 playing outdoors. Use netting to cover a baby's carriage or playpen. This may be difficult to do when the
 weather is hot, but it will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

Health Department News (continued)

How do I find out if spraying for mosquitoes will occur in my neighborhood and when?

The MDPH State Laboratory Institute tests mosquitoes for the virus on a regular basis. A community's decision to spray may depend on a number of factors including the results of mosquito surveillance efforts. During the summer, this information can change from one week to the next; therefore, it is possible that the decision to spray will be made only a few days before it will occur. For this reason, check your local newspaper, radio station, cable television station, the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project website at: www.cmmcp.org.

How can I exclude my property if I do not want it sprayed?

Homeowners can ask to exclude their property from public area-wide pesticide applications under the Department of Agricultural Resources' regulation, 333 CMR 13.03, titled Pesticide Board, Exclusions for Application. To request the exclusion, residents should send a certified letter to their town or city clerk by March 1st of each year. After March 1st, CMMCP will still try to accommodate requests. Specific questions regarding the regulation and opting out of spraying in Westford can be answered by calling CMMCP (508) 393-3055. The Department of Agricultural Resources, Pesticide Bureau can also be reached by calling 617-626-1700.

Common mosquito misconceptions:

Electronic repellers really work!! No, they really don't. You shouldn't waste your money - your time is better spent surveying your area to eliminate mosquito breeding sources such as containers with water.

Bug zappers control mosquitoes - the common ultraviolet "bug zapper" does not control mosquitoes, and can actually reduce populations of beneficial insects.

If I have bat (or bird) houses, I won't have mosquitoes - Not really true - birds and bats may consume mosquitoes at times, but not so you would notice. They prefer larger prey and will not reduce the mosquito population appreciably.

Who can I call if I have more questions?

Call the Westford Health Department if you have any questions about West Nile virus EEE or mosquito control at 978 692-5509. Fact sheets about the virus are available on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website (www.state.ma.us/dph).

What are some other sources of information on West Nile virus EEE and pesticides?

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets
- National Pesticides Telecommunications Network (NTPN), www.ace.orst.edu/info/nptn/wnv/
- Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project (508) 393-3055: www.cmmcp.org/products.htm

For more information about West Nile Virus or EEE disease:

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health, www.mass.gov/dph/wnv or www.mass.gov/dph/eee
- CDC, www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile or www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis





